

Message Text

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73

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 COA-02 DLOS-07 CG-00 DOTE-00 IO-14

DRC-01 /114 W

----- 014299

R 230953Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3544

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC 7146

UNCLAS BANGKOK 8422

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, VS, TH

SUBJ: CHARUNPHAN ON THAI/SOUTH VIETNAMESE RELATIONS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 13. FOLLOWING ARE EXTRACTS OF HIS COMMENTS FROM AN UNOFFICIAL USIS TRANSLATION ON THAI/ SOUTH VIETNAMESE RELATIONS.

REPORTER: I HAVE HEARD THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR CAME TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS THIS MORNING (MAY 13). WERE TALKS HELD ON THE INCIDENT IN WHICH A THAI FISHERMAN WAS SHOT AND KILLED BY A SOUTH VIETNAMESE NAVY SHIP?

CHARUNPHAN: THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT INVITED HIM TO COME HERE AND MEET HIM. IT WAS ONLY IN ORDER TO REQUEST THE AMBASSADOR TO SPEED UP MAKING CONTACT WITH HIS GOVERNMENT BECAUSE WE PRESENTED UNCLASSIFIED

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A MEMOIRE TO HIM FOR HIS GOVERNMENT ON THIS INCIDENT

BEFORE I WENT TO INDONESIA. I SAW A NEWS REPORT TODAY WHICH SAID THAT A STATEMENT HAS BEEN MADE BY A SOUTH VIETNAMESE SPOKESMAN SAYING THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS READY AND GLAD TO HOLD NEGOTIATIONS, THEREFORE THIS IS A REPORT THAT IS POSITIVE AND THAT IS GOOD, INDICATING THERE MIGHT BE A WAY FOR TALKS TO BE HELD.

REPORTER: WHAT WAS DISCUSSED DURING THE MEETING HELD THIS MORNING?

CHARUNPHAN: I HAVE NOT RECEIVED A REPORT OF THIS MEETING YET. ALL I KNOW IS THAT THE VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR WILL LEAVE FOR VIETNAM ON THURSDAY. WE HAVE REASSERTED OUR ATTITUDE IN ORDER TO BE CERTAIN THAT IT IS UNDERSTOOD, AND WE MOST PROBABLY WENT ON TO TALK OF A NEW INCIDENT WHICH HAS OCCURRED, IN WHICH ANOTHER FISHING BOAT WAS SEIZED ON MAY 3, A FISHING BOAT WHICH HAD A 13-MAN CREW. WE HAVE RECEIVED A REPORT ON THIS NEW INCIDENT FROM OUR EMBASSY ALREADY. THE NAME OF THE FISHING BOAT IS NOT KNOWN YET, BUT WE HAVE ITS NUMBER AND I WILL GIVE IT TO YOU LATER.

WHAT IS OF IMPORTANCE, AS I SAID IN A FORMER PRESS CONFERENCE THE SAME DAY AFTER I HAD MET THE VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR, AND AS I POINTED OUT TO THE PRESS, IS THAT OUR AIM IS TO FIND A WAY FOR A COMPROMISE TO BE REACHED THROUGH TALKS AND MUTUAL AGREEMENT. OUR PROPOSAL IS THAT THE BEST WAY WOULD BE TO SET UP A GROUP OF OFFICIALS, AT A LEVEL TO BE AGREED ON, TO HOLD MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS EITHER IN BANGKOK OR IN SAIGON, IN ORDER TO FIND A WAY FOR AGREEMENT TO BE REACHED. FINDING A WAY TO COMPROMISE AND REACH AGREEMENT IS THE BEST ALTERNATIVE FOR COUNTRIES WHICH ARE FRIENDS. IN REGARD TO THE NEWS REPORT THAT WE WILL SEND PATROL BOATS, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT, MY VIEW IS SHOULD WE PLAN TAKING ANY ACTION THAT MIGHT LEAD TO FRICTION IT WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT A WAY TO HOLD TALKS.

REPORTER: WASN'T THE THAI FISHING BOAT SEIZED THE SAME DAY THAT YOU HANDED THE MEMOIRE TO THE VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR?

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CHARUNPHAN: WHAT WAS THE DATE? IT WAS ON FRIDAY, MAY 3, THAT I HANDED OVER THE NOTE. IT WAS THE SAME DAY, BUT THE INCIDENT OCCURRED EARLIER BECAUSE THAT FISHING BOAT AND ITS 13 MAN CREW WERE ARRESTED AT 3 A.M. ON MAY 3. ACCORDING TO OUR REPORT, OUR EMBASSY WAS INFORMED BY THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES THAT THEY HAD SEIZED THE FISHING BOAT WHILE IT WAS CATCHING FISH. THIS IS THE REPORT WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM OUR EMBASSY, AND THIS INCIDENT OCCURRED ON

MAY 3, SEVERAL DAYS AGO. THIS FISHING BOAT WAS SEIZED AT 3 A.M. AND ITS NUMBER IS 134877. THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES WERE MOST PROBABLY NOT ABLE TO READ ITS NAME AND COULD ONLY READ THIS NUMBER, THUS BEING THE REASON WHY THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO GIVE US THE NAME OF THE BOAT. THEY SAID THEY SEIZED THE BOAT 21 MILES FROM PAN GANG ISLAND AND THEY SEIZED IT WHILE IT WAS IN THE ACT OF CATCHING FISH. THEY TOOK THE BOAT AND IT IS BEING KEPT IN PHU QUOC ISLAND. THIS WAS THE REPORT SENT BY OUR EMBASSY ON MAY 7, SAYING THERE HAD BEEN NO OPPORTUNITY YET TO SEND AN OFFICIAL TO GO AND VISIT OUR FISHERMEN.

SINCE THIS NEW INCIDENT IN WHICH THIS FISHING BOAT WAS SEIZED OCCURRED BEFORE WE HANDED OVER OUR NOTE, IT COULD NOT THEREFORE BE SAID THAT A VIOLENT MEASURE WAS TAKEN SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH OUR HANDING OVER OF THE NOTE. WE ARE WAITING FOR A REPLY NOW, AND THE AMBASSADOR IS GOING TO REPORT IN PERSON BECAUSE I HAVE ALREADY SPOKEN TO HIM AND INDICATED THAT THERE IS A WAY BY WHICH TO REACH COMPROMISE.

REPORTER: WHOSE AMBASSADOR, SIR?

CHARUNPHAN: NOT OURS. KHUN SUBAN HAS BEEN GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS ALSO. BUT I TALKED WITH THE AMBASSADOR BEFORE I WENT TO INDONESIA ON MAY 9. WHEN I SPOKE WITH HIM ON MAY 3 I PROPOSED FOR NEGOTIATIONS TO BE HELD. WE ARE WAITING FOR A REPLY NOW. SHOULD A FORMAL REPLY BE MADE ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL TO FIND A WAY TO HOLD TALKS, WE WOULD THEN HOLD CONSULTATIONS ON WHERE TO HOLD MEETINGS AND AT WHAT LEVEL FOR THE TALKS TO BE.

2. COMMENT: THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE "BANGKOK POST" CARRIED AN ARTICLE MAY 23 STATING THAT THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE UNCLASSIFIED

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FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PHAEN WANNAMETHI, WILL HEAD A THAI DELEGATION GOING TO SAIGON THE WEEK OF MAY 27. THE DELEGATION WILL HOLD TALKS WITH THE GVN OVER THE DISPUTED FISHING ZONE. PHAEN WAS THE NUMBER TWO MAN IN THE THAI EMBASSY IN SAIGON IN THE LATE 50'S AND IS NOW THE RANKING CAREER OFFICIAL IN THE MINISTRY. MASTERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NAVAL FORCES, FOREIGN RELATIONS, SHIP DETENTION, PRESS CONFERENCES, FISHERMEN, DEATHS, FISHING BOATS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BANGKO08422
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740129-0750
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740524/aaaaavdp.tel
Line Count: 161
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 OCT 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 OCT 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <09 JAN 2003 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHARUNPHAN ON THAI/SOUTH VIETNAMESE RELATIONS CINCPAC FOR POLAD
TAGS: PFOR, VS, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005